



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2022-1295; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01181-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a report of a nose landing gear (NLG) sliding tube rupture that led to a NLG collapse. This proposed AD would require inspection of certain NLG and main landing gear (MLG) sliding tubes and applicable corrective actions and eventual replacement of all affected parts, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference (IBR). This proposed AD would also prohibit the installation of affected parts under certain conditions. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

AD Docket: You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1295; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

Material Incorporated by Reference:

- For material that is proposed for IBR in this NPRM, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 00•0; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; website easa.europa.eu. You may find this material on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu. It is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1295.

- You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Manuel Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, FAA, International Validation Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 562-627-5256; email Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2022-1295; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01181-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov), including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Manuel Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, FAA, International Validation Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 562-627-5256; email

Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2021-0236, dated October 29, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0236) (also referred to as the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes, Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -215, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. Model A320-215 airplanes are not certificated by the FAA and are not included on the U.S. type certificate data sheet; this proposed AD therefore does not include those airplanes in the applicability.

The MCAI states that NLG sliding tube rupture, leading to NLG collapse during taxiing, occurred on a Model A320 airplane. Investigations identified overheating damage on that NLG, caused by incorrect accomplishment of a repair on the chromium-plated diameter of the sliding tube during the last NLG overhaul. Further investigations identified a batch of NLG and MLG sliding tubes that are possibly affected by a similar condition, which, if not detected and corrected, could lead to NLG or MLG structural failure and subsequent collapse of the gears, possibly resulting in damage to the airplane and injury to occupants. The MCAI requires inspections of affected parts, applicable corrective actions, and eventual replacement of all affected parts.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1295.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies procedures for a detailed inspection of the visible chrome surface of affected NLG and MLG sliding tubes for any discrepancies (cracks), a

magnetic particle inspection (MPI) and Barkhausen noise inspection (BNI) of affected parts for any discrepancies (cracks), an MPI, eventual replacement of affected parts, and corrective actions. Corrective actions include immediate replacement of the NLG or MLG sliding tube or shock absorber. This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

FAA's Determination

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI described above. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2021-0236 described previously, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. This proposed AD would also prohibit the installation of affected parts under certain conditions.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2021-0236 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2021-0236 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as

exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2021-0236 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2021-0236. Service information required by EASA AD 2021-0236 for compliance will be available at regulations.gov under Docket No. FAA-2022-1295 after the FAA final rule is published.

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 1,825 airplanes of U.S. registry. Currently, there are no affected U.S.-registered airplanes that would need the required actions because the affected part is not installed on any U.S.-registered airplanes. U.S.-registered airplanes therefore would need to comply with only the parts prohibition specified in this proposed AD.

If an affected airplane is imported and placed on the U.S. Register in the future, the FAA provides the following cost estimates to comply with the required actions in this proposed AD:

Estimated costs for required actions

Labor cost	Parts cost*	Cost per product
50 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$4,250	\$0	\$4,250

*The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the replacement parts specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA’s authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency’s authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

Airbus SAS: Docket No. FAA-2022-1295; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01181-T.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by
[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL
REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS Model airplanes specified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD, certificated in any category.

(1) Model A318-111, -112, -121, and -122 airplanes.

(2) Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.

(3) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.

(4) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 32, Landing gear.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of a nose landing gear (NLG) sliding tube rupture leading to a NLG collapse. The FAA is issuing this AD to address NLGs and main landing gears (MLGs) that may have been subject to the incorrect accomplishment of a repair, which, if not detected and corrected, could lead to NLG or MLG structural failure and subsequent collapse of the gears, possibly resulting in damage to the airplane and injury to occupants.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraphs (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2021-0236, dated October 29, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0236).

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0236

(1) Where EASA AD 2021-0236 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where paragraph (1) of EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies to do a detailed visual inspection, replace the text “the instructions of the AOT” with “paragraphs 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.2.5 of the AOT.”

(3) Where paragraph (2) of EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies to do an magnetic particle inspection (MPI) and a Barkhausen noise inspection (BNI), replace the text “the instructions of the AOT” with “paragraphs 4.2.2.3 and 4.2.2.6 of the AOT.”

(4) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies that “if discrepancies are detected on an affected part” for this AD discrepancies include cracking and heat damage.

(5) Where the service information referenced in EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies to quarantine parts, this AD does not require that action.

(6) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2021-0236 does not apply to this AD.

(i) No Reporting Requirement

Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2021-0236 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include that requirement.

(j) Additional AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA DOA. If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(k) Related Information

For more information about this AD, contact Manuel Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, FAA, International Validation Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 562-627-5256; email Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0236, dated October 29, 2021.

(ii) [Reserved]

(3) For EASA AD 2021-0236, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at ad.easa.europa.eu.

(4) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(5) You may view this material that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email fr.inspection@nara.gov, or go to www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

Issued on October 3, 2022.

Christina Underwood, Acting Director,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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